

GC
929.2
QR77B

GEN

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01597 2752

GC 929.2 DR77E
BARTER, SAMUEL G.
ORSER FAMILY

✓

"Or"

ORSER FAMILY

by

Samuel G. Barter

Avondale, N. B.

GENEALOGY COLLECTION
PUBLIC LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE & ALLEN CO., IND.

YOUNG & RUBIN

NEW YORK

1918

NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION
1918

Presented to

Harvey Cress

by

Ceward S. Barber

1952

Allen County Public Library
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

While in this book, the author does not attempt to give a complete history of the Orser family, he has assembled much material which will be of interest to all the descendents of Hartland's first family. Much of the material in this book has not heretofore appeared in print.

To all those who assisted me in gathering the historical material I express my sincere thanks.

S. G. BARTER

Avondale, N. B.

CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter One	7
Chapter Two	11
Chapter Three	13
Chapter Four	15
Chapter Five	19
Chapter Six	20
Chapter Seven	24
Chapter Eight	26
Chapter Nine	30

CHAPTER ONE

Ancesters of the Orser family, the first settlers in what is now Hartland lived in Holland, and the Dutch name was Van Auslin. When Holland owned New York State they called it New Holland and New York City was called New Amsterdam. Albany was called Orange. The Dutch government gave the Van Auslin family a plantation at what is now Ossining. When the British took the place from Holland they confirmed the Dutch grants to the settlers. They became British subjects, and the name became anglicized as Orser. The Van was discontinued in the surname. When the Americans rebelled against British rule, the Orser family mainly remained loyal, and Capt. Jonas Orser was a lieutenant in a company commanded by Capt. Abraham Ladien in the month of July, 1776, at Tarrytown, and was called out at various times during 1776-77 and 78 as commissioner by Gov. George Clinton, and was elected Overseer of the Poor in April 1779. He became a captain in 1778, and died in July 7, 1782. His wife Elizabeth died in 1826, and was buried in the Old Dutch Churchyard at Sleepy Hollow, where her memorial stone still stands. Mrs. Orser before her marriage was Miss Elizabeth Pugsley. They had 13 children: Talman, Deborah, William, Edward, Hounesville, Jonas, Elizabeth, Abraham, Mary, Joshua, Phoebe, Leah and Rachel.

There were several families of Orsers besides Capt. Jonas Orser, and his family. Jonas Orser's six sons served in the British troops, and I add a letter written by and saved as a souvenir of Revolutionary soldiers at Tarrytown compiled by M. D. Raymond at Tarrytown, N. R., entitled "The Surprise at Orser's": "Some of our men from Salem and Stephentown, who had been on a raid collecting plunder from loyal families wished to take the nearest road back home and were anxious to leave, so as we approached the crossing we agreed to all go to the Orser farmhouse on the bank of the North of Hudson River, and divide our plunder, refresh ourselves, and our horses. It was now 9 a.m.

"Our horses were put in the barn and barnyard and fed, and we proceeded to sell our spoil at auction: While these events were going on, the enemy probably reinforced at both ferrys renewed pursuit, but pulled up between Tarrytown and Sing Sing, where they were informed by a man named Curry, a cousin of the Orser boys, who had seen us as we halted at Orser's and he told the British where we were. They now pushed on and when they approached Orser's they sent a party of about fifty men around a lane so as to get in our rear and lay in ambush to cut us off, so we could not retreat. This party by a circuitous march occupied the ground north of Orser's while the other party of about 20 advanced on us from cover of the orchard. We lost the rest of our loot and most of our horses." This letter was written by one of the rebels, and the British took them all prisoners and away to New York city. After this capture in 1782 in the month of May, Mr. Orser's buildings were burned, because their sons were in the British army and their goods seized, and the parents took refuge in the British lines. All the Orser families lived at, or near Sing Sing and Tarrytown. Sing Sing is now called Ossining and the Orsers scattered from Nova Scotia to Ontario, and many of their descendents in different parts of the United States. But, when they burned the Orser home, near where the capture of the Raiding Rebels took place, described in the letter copied above, the Rebels took 3 men as captives, as they wished to punish them for informing on them and causing their capture. It is supposed—but not sure—that one was a Mr. Curry. One son, William Orser, was arresed by the Rebels and was confined with other Loyalists charged with giving information to the British. Mr. Orser and two others, names now unknown, escaped and fled to the woods. The Rebels pursued them but did not retake them. They kept in the woods as much as possible and travelled by night when in the open. After a few days they were going through the woods and came to a small field, crossed it to the edge and lie down to rest, but fell asleep.

Mr. Orser told after that he awoke just as the sun was coming up; His two companions were asleep and sitting on one

of them was a little red bird (on his breast) looking in his comrade's face. Mr. Orser awakened his two comrades and told them of the little bird and at once his comrade said: "That means I will be killed." They were lying in a few bushes by a road side and some Rebel horsemen were fast approaching. They all sprang up and ran across the field to escape. The horsemen opened fire on them and one man fell in the field. It was the one the red bird had alighted on. Mr. Orser and the other comrade got to the wood, but as the Rebels dismounted and followed them, they parted. Mr. Orser never heard of his comrade after. He continued all day and the next, keeping to the woods, without food, but on the morning of the third day he came to a small clearing with a small house and barn, a road running through the clearing. He heard someone threshing with a flail in the barn. He cautiously came to the barn keeping a watch for any one on the road, also keeping the barn between himself and the house. There was a little door in the big barn and stepped in quickly, shut the door and with his back to the door and as the man threshing looked at him, Mr. Orser said: "I am cold and hungry, but if you are a King's man I am safe, but if not, God help me for I am all in." The man came toward him and asked: "Did any one see you come." Mr. Orser answered: "No I've been in the woods two days and two nights. I'm a King's man trying to get away to safety." The man said: "You are lucky, for I am a King's man, too. Come I'll give you a place to rest and if you trust me and do as I say I will get you good and help you escape."

He had a hole cut in the hay mow big enough for a man to lay down in and also get up on his knees. Mr. Orser crawled in and the man brought him food and drink and Mr. Orser was there two days and two nights. The man kept him and told Mr. Orser he had helped several Loyalists escape that way.

On the third day he supplied Mr. Orser with food and told him the way to go and bade him God-speed, as he had found that no rebels were near. Mr. Orser made good his escape and joined the British.

After the war he came to New Brunswick and was given a government grant of land in Carleton County, where the

Town of Hartland now is situated. The grant was officially given and is recorded as at the Mouth of the Becaguimic river.

CHAPTER TWO

As near as can be found and I must say my daughter, Mrs. Jane B. Allen, who represents the Lepage Company of Gloucester, Mass., and who travels in the New England States and New York State, has searched the records of the early days of the United States has found a lot of information for me, and it seems William Orser's father was imprisoned and his property destroyed, on the expulsion of The Loyalists, who had favoured the British. Mr. Orser died in 1782 on board the ship on which he was sailing to Canada. Mrs. Orser, William's mother, died and was buried in New York State, in the Dutch Cemetery. Two daughters Phoebe and Lydia, both girls were nurses in the British cause, were killed in service; nothing was known of John after the war, but William went to Saint John.

The Americans, who by the aid of France, Holland and Spain, continued the war until a Treaty was made with the British government, granting the Independence of the American States, and on certain conditions; one was The States were to reimburse the Loyalists for the property the Rebels destroyed and stock taken. In the book "American Loyalists" in the Library in New York, vol. 22, page 213, the account of losses sustained by Mr. Orser's heirs (which was never paid) as the Americans never fulfilled their part of the Treaty which gave them their Independence. This shows the family in good standing, and how they suffered. Mrs. Orser placed the following claim: (Money is in pounds sterling):

100 acres of improved land at 5 pounds	
an acre	500
95 acres of timber land	427
An outhouse not finished	100
1 yoke of steers	12
8 cows at £6 each	48
2 fine horses	40

8 cattle	88
20 hogs	15
33 sheep	26
Household furniture (New York Pounds)	60
Damage to stone dwelling house	30

£1346

(In dollars it would have been worth about \$6,107.00)

By this we can see what the family lost and all help they received was from the British; the Americans kept all! And what the Loyalists went through was far from what one could expect for they were driven away from their homes and one young man who had served with the Loyalists on leaving New Yory City (just before the Loyalists took pasage to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia) went to see some of his people before he took ship. He was beaten, daubed with tar, his eyebrows cut off, and used worse than a negro slave.

William Orser was born in 1762, and the next part of this story will give the family history in New Brunswick.

CHAPTER THREE

William Orser had married a Miss Craig, and on coming to Saint John had applied for land, and a brother of Mrs. Orser, a Mr. James Craig, had married a Miss Mary Blake, who was said to be the first English girl baby born on the St. John river. Both families came up by boat, Mr. Orser was given a farm which took in the land at the mouth of the Becaguinee river, and a little above its mouth, and down near the center of the now Town of Hartland. Mr. Craig was given land a mile or more north of Mr. Orser's land. Both families had a family of 6 children. Mr. Craig sickened and died, and Mrs. Orser also died, and in 1802 Mr. Orser married the widow Craig (formerly Mary Blake).

The Maliceet Indians had a summer village or camp on the intervale, and would come in the early spring, after the ice had run out and plant corn and pumpkins, and in the Fall would gather the corn and pumpkins, peel and slice the pumpkins, spread them out on sheets of bark and dry them. Then they would pack the dried pumpkins and corn in baskets and move back into the woods, where the cold wind could not reach their camps and they would hunt and trap until spring opened again, then move back to the River for the Spring and Summer.

The Indians objected to Mr. Orser's coming, and called a Pow Wow, or Council, when they came back in the Spring and found him in possession. They built a big fire by the river and gathered around to discuss the matter. Mr. Orser went right down and talked to them, explaining how The Great White Father had given him the land marked off, and he must, and would stay. The Indians threatened and scowled, but Mr. Orser was firm, and said: "On my side of the line I stay, on your side of the line you grow corn and pumpkins ; it was looking like trouble but Mrs. Orser, formerly Mary Blake, was familiar with doctoring the sick children and many Indian children were ill with some children's sickness (measles I think) and Mrs. Orser went right down and helped with the sick children, and

CHAPTER FOUR

William Orser lived on his farm at Hartland until he was an old man, over 70 years old; and his children settled around mostly along the river. William, the oldest son by his first wife, had the farm next above his youngest brother, Samuel, but went to Ontario. He first settled on the farm shown on a land grant map on file at Crown Land Office at Fredericton labelled as "William Orser, Jr." and I have the original grant in my possession now. Nothing was heard of this William Orser after he went to Ontario. William was the only son who lived to marry, of his father (William Orser) and his first wife, Mary Shaw. Of his second family by his second wife (Mary Blake Craig) he had 6 sons who all lived to marry; Evard married Abigail Shaw, Stephen married Jane McIsaac, second marriage Sarah Foster, John Moses married Martha Hamilton, George E. died young, George W. married Harriet Shaw, and Samuel D. married Irene Shaw.

Mr. William Orser, the father, who came with his family to settle, built his first house about where the present barber shop, or dwelling, where Roy Stevens barbers now (1950), so as to be near the big spring; now having a brick shelter over it for town purposes. Later a large house, or addition, was built, before the railway was built into Hartland; and the first engine on the railway burned wood instead of coal, and as the railway was built very near the back of Mr. Orser's house, sparks set fire and burned the first old Orser home, and then Mr. Orser built a home up the hill, back from the family cemetery on the up-ground back of the village now, and still used for a cemetery and where a monument has been placed for great grandfather and great grandmother and grandchildren of the first William Orser and his son Samuel and many more of the family are buried there. The cemetery is now owned by Neil and Allan McLean, sons of Samuel D. Orser's daughter, Frances, who married Allan McLean, a native of Whycocomagh, Inverness Co., Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

While Samuel Orser lived he was anxious to see Hartland grow to be a real village or town. He would give a lot of land to a blacksmith or a person who would start a business. There he and the boys farmed, cleared land and lumbered; so did his brothers, and Samuel Orser had a permit from the New Brunswick Government to cut timber on the Aroostook River, and was busy getting lumber there when the historic Aroostook War broke out. When the Americans claimed the Aroostook was their land, after Mr. Orser had his lumber hauled to the banks of the Aroostook River to drive it down to the St. John, the Americans seized his lumber and used it to build the old fort which gave the town of Fort Fairfield its name—it was named Fairfield after the Governor of Maine at that time, General Fairfield. The subsequent Treaty by the British and Americans gave the ground where Mr. Orser's logs had been cut from, and were piled, to the Americans, so he lost his lumber, and at one time you could see his private mark on some of the lumber. Mr. Orser lived to be 77 and then passed to his reward. Mrs. Orser lived to be well up in her eighties; she spent her last days at the home of her daughter Frances at Bristol.

Frances Orser, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel B. Orser, married Allan J. McLean, who was a blacksmith from Cape Breton, N. S. He was a member of a Scotch Highland family. They had four children: Neil McLean, who is a senator in our Canadian House of Senate at Ottawa, he resides in Saint John, N. B., and Allen, his brother, who lives at Black's Harbor, they manage the fish packing factory, the largest factory for fish packing in Canada and two daughters, Annie, who married George Caldwell and lives near Black's Harbor and the sister Hattie, who married Garfield Larlee and resides in Fredericton, N. B., where her husband is Asst. Treasurer of the N. B. Electrical Power Commission.

The boys of Samuel B. Orser, Thomas Rainsford married Harriet A. Britton, John married Augusta Campbell, and second wife Melissa Shaw; ~~Frederick~~ married Attie Mooers, Charles married down in the State of Georgia, U. S. A., and two other sons, Ludlow and Ward, died in childhood.

George W. Orser, son of William Orser, and a brother of

Samuel B. Orser, began to preach at the age of 15 years; was married to Miss Abigail Shaw at the age of 20, and was ordained as a minister the same year. He was one of the greatest ministers ever born, or ordained, in this Province. He had a son Elijah, who was also a gifted Minister of the Gospel. Rev. Charles H. Orser, a son of Edward Orser, was also a minister of the Primitive Church, and wrote a good account of the life of George W. Orser, and it is a book much beloved by all members of the Primitive Baptist Church.

George W. Orser was the father of twin boys, Enoch and Elijah; Enoch died young but Elijah married Miss Margaret Mallory and they had five children: Mary married William Cogswell, Annie Jane married Arthur Hooper, who died and left her a widow, now living at Fort Fairfield, age over 90 years; Lois married Fred Clark. Two sons, Whitfield and David lived in Florida.

Rainsford Orser and his wife had a large family; they first lived at what is now Carlisle, afterwards to Colorado. Their family was: Weston, who married Minnie Patterson; Adelia, who married John Weed of Vermont; George R., who married Sarah Steel of Vermont; Hannah, who married Moses Turner; May, a twin of Hannah, married Charles Laskey, Lowell, Mass.; Samuel, who married H. M. Good, she still lives in the State of Washington, U. S. A.; Eva Alberta, who married John Dolan; Abigail Irene, who married Frank Thomas; Treceia, who married Joseph Babcock; Henry Ward, who married Wilhemina Evans; Jessie Louise, who married Ralph Burrough; Arthur, who married Mary Wallman; Guy P., who lives in the New England States.

John Orser, son of Samuel B. Orser, and his first wife, had three children: Oakley, who married Sophia Hanson; Georgia, who married Murray Hill and Nettie, who married Manzer Day. The children by the second marriage were:

Maude, married first to Eugene Day; second to George Wallace and third to Rainsford Libby; Clara, married to Herbert H. Hanson; Allan J., married to Sadie Coffey; Lottie, married to Harvey Jones first, second to Coley Craig.

Samuel Orser, son of Samuel B. Orser, married Attie

Moore, and they had one daughter Frances (Frankie) Orser, who married Walter Whitney. They live in Lowell, Mass., U. S. A., and have two daughters, Bertha, who married Al. Frost, who was born in Knowlesville, N. B., now they live in Roslindale, Mass., and the other daughter, Barbara, is not married yet, but lives with her parents. Mr. Samuel Orser died after Frankie was born and his wife then married Edward Thomas, Lowell.

Samuel B. Orser's son Fred married Phoebe Bishop and their daughter, Annie, married John Grant. She is now a widow but lives on their old farm at Kilburn, N. B.

CHAPTER FIVE

Samuel B. Orser's daughter, Trecia H. M. Orser, married James A. Barter of Avondale. They first began married life on the North Branch of the Becaguinnac River, the settlement now known as Carlisle; but soon returned to Avondale, his boyhood home. (Mr. Barter was a farmer and carpenter, and the son of James M. Barter and Mrs. Barter from West Saint John and helped found the village of Avondale). They were the first settlers at Avondale in 1855. James A. and Trecia Barter had 11 children; 3 died while young, but 7 sons and 1 daughter lived to marry. (Charlotte L., James, Samuel, William, John, Allan, Percy and Harry) James Barter passed away at 87 years and Mrs. Barter at 67.

The youngest son of Samuel B. Orser, Charles, went south to Georgia and married Miss Maggie Driggers. They had 5 children: Samuel, Irene George Orser, who married James A. Jones and lives at Fitzgerald, Ga., U. S. A.; Maggie Mary, who married Mr. Reiner Heinen of New Orleans, La.; Maude Orser Youngblood, living in New Orleans, La.; Charles Ludlow, who has a family of four sons and 2 daughters: Ransford, living in Georgia; Henry, living in Alabama, Charles, who lives in the "Ship" shaped house at St. Simonds, Ga., and J. D. Orser (the 4th son) is unmarried, he served 4 years during World War 2 in the U. S. Navy. His eldest daughter died young. Inez married J. A. Henningsgard of Inglewood, Cal. Irene married James A. Jones 49 years ago next October 20th and they have three children: James Derrick Jones, living at Colorado Springs, Colo., who is married and has three children (Nancy Margaret, age 20, Patricia Louise, 16, and James, age 9 years). Joseph A. Jones, a captain in the U. S. Army 97th Bomb. Wing, Hq. Texas, not married, 35 years of age. Daughter Irene Louise Jones, married Lee Whitmire of Hendersonville, N. C., and died April 6, 1932, leaving one son Robert Lee, who is learning to be a lawyer in College now.

CHAPTER SIX

We are all interested in houses these days. A house that is different is owned by Charles Orser of Georgia. Mr. Orser is a great-great-grandson of William Orser, a Loyalist, who settled at Hartland, around 1800, and has many descendants throughout New Brunswick and the U. S. A.

A recent write-up in "The Atlanta Journal" telling of this interesting house reads as follows:

"The Charles Orser family of St. Simonds Island, Ga., have all the advantages of a sea voyage with none of its discomforts. They live in a house which is exactly like a fine ship except that it never leaves the land.

Thinking of the ship (not its occupants) one is reminded of the nursery rhyme:

"Mother, may I go out to swim?"

"Yes, my darling daughter.

Hang your clothes on a hickory limb

But don't go near the water."

The Orsers bought the house from Monte Ferst of Atlanta, who built it for his family and friends. Mr. Ferst knew that most people get a big thrill out of an ocean voyage. He himself felt that there is nothing like the atmosphere on a great liner.

One day while riding a train and dreaming of a ship, he sketched the plans for a vessel to be beached on a breezy point at St. Simons. The final result was the "boathouse," a ship-like, bright-funnelled structure conforming closely to the upper three decks of an ocean liner.

While it was under construction it constantly drew crowds of interested spectators and visitors to the Island continue to be thrilled by the boat-house. The illusion of a ship is so complete that newcomers think at first that a liner has run aground.

A ship's name-plate, reading "HRMS 27," still hangs on the bridge. The majestic sounding name suggests "His Royal

Majesty's ship 27", but really it is the initials of Mr. and Mrs. Ferst and their son and daughter, Robert and Suzanne. The "27" was their telephone number. One of the bedrooms is still referred to by the new owners as "Suzanne's room."

The yard about the house was originally landscaped to resemble the decks of a ship. But most of the smooth, beautiful lawn between the house and the ocean has been washed away by high tides. These encroaching sea waters have done more severe damage than just eating away the front yard.

Two weeks after Mr. Orser bought the house last fall, a lashing storm washed thirty feet of land from under the house itself. The concrete floor had been poured directly on the sand when the house was built. A few hours after the storm swept away the sand beneath the garage and games room, the concrete slab collapsed. The crash sounded like a dramatization of the Biblical parable about the house built on the sand. The result was a sickening sight for the Orsers.

The foundation has now been rebuilt, this time of heavy cross-beams reinforced with steel girders placed on deep creosoted piling. A tall, heavy bulwark has been built and now the owners await with interest the high tides of another September and October.

Mr. and Mrs. Orser have four small children — Edwin, Ruth, Betty and Carol — who delight in showing guests through their boat-home. It is a lucky visitor who makes this unusual tour with his young guides. As one walks about the house one might recall Robert Louis Stevenson's childhood fancies from "A Child's Garden of Verses".

"This one is sailing and that one is moored:
Hark to the song of the sailors on board!
And see on the steps of my palace, the kings
Coming and going with presents and things."

The tour starts in the playroom with its huge fireplace for barbecuing. This games room was converted into a big dormitory for several visiting ministers during the recent Annual Conference of the Methodist Church which was held in Brunswick in June.

Adjoining the games room is a kitchen. A large guest room

on this same deck was also used by preachers during the Conference. The spacious closets of the guest room are large enough to accommodate all the wives that Bluebeard hanged in his little horror room — or (if you prefer a less gruesome thought) dozens of evening dresses. The shoe closet, built before rationing was ever dreamed of, holds comfortably at least a dozen pairs of slippers.

Completing the first deck are two showers and dressing rooms for bathers, three bedrooms and baths for servants, a laundry and a three-car garage. The second deck is the Orser family's focal point of living. The main stairway enters a grand salon and ship's bar. During the Conference the bar was used as a dining table for children. The four young Orsers were a sight to see when they perched on the tall stools to eat their oatmeal and orange juice. The older persons ate more conveniently at a bamboo dining table.

One hundred and seventy-eight light bulbs are used in this room alone. The lighting fixtures are concealed, so there is no glare. The room is decorated in a marine manner with fitting color scheme and furnishings. The bar is encased with glass tiles which can be lighted to give a crystal brilliance.

In addition to salon, the second deck includes a solarium, a kitchen (or galley to use nautical language) and three bedrooms (staterooms, if you must). But if they are staterooms, they are bigger than most, more like the bridal suite on the "Queen Mary". Each bedroom has three exposures.

On the top deck are the Captain's bridge and the sun decks, a perfect place for dancing in the moonlight. The bow of the ship-house is toward the ocean, and so near the water that it creates the definite feeling of being at sea. Bobby Jones, of Atlanta, once made some pictures while visiting the Fersts' boat house. The illusion was perfect — friends who saw the pictures asked him, "When were you abroad?"

Mr. Orser often finds the entrance to his home blocked by curious and admiring visitors who come to stare at his landlocked ship. After the crowds got to be so large that he often couldn't get in or out of his front yard, he had to put up "Private" signs. With the whole front yard for a sand pile

the four little Orsers are sharing with their parents the unique experience of living aboard ship the whole year 'round. Come fall and high tides, their year will be rounded out, and the sturdy new foundation will submit to the "stream that beats vehemently" upon it; his time, they hope, like "the house founded on a rock", the elements will be unable to shake it."

CHAPTER SEVEN

I have given in former parts of this History the early settlement of this Family, and I was anxious to have it printed so the young of the Family, and the ones not yet born, might look back on their fore parents, so I carefully searched out the past history and I do not know any Families more closely connected by inter-marriage than the Families of Orser, Shaw and Craigs, as this historical account shows, and the Orser Family is widely scattered, as I find Samuel D Orser, son of the late William Orser, who first settled at Hartland (yes, first white settler there) on a visit to New York state about 1881 found Stephen Orser, the warden of Sing Sing Prison. And to show Orsers still live in New York, I will add two items from New York papers: "Funeral of Capt. Orser. Capt. Henry Orser's funeral service in St. Paul's Church, with Rev. Lynwood Smith officiating, pallbearers: Major John J. Burns, George Ellis, Richard Nicolas, W. D. West. A large delegation of Masons attended. The service at the grave was performed by Charles L. Hutchins, worshipful master. Capt. Henry Orser died May 13, 1945."

"William E. Orser of Millwood, N. Y., recently died in the hospital at Ossining, N. Y., at the age of 60. Mr. Orser was formerly president of Millwood Fire Department. He leaves a widow, Mrs. Edith Young Orser, 3 sons: Herbert, William, and Kenneth, and a daughter, Mrs. Arthur Tompkins of Ossining, N. Y."

Ossining, N. Y., is the name of the town in which Sing Sing prison is situated. The above two death items bring to mind that the Orser Family is represented largely in N. Y. yet. The statement of Mr. William E. Orser's death ended by saying: "This will be of interest to many in New Brunswick, who are descendents of William Orser, a Loyalist who went to New Brunswick in 1783 from Ossining, N. Y." (taken from the New York Times).

I have written this history realizing I am "up in years"

and I am a great grandson of William Orser, who was first white settler at Hartland, and I felt the young generation of this sturdy loyal old gentleman would appreciate an account of their family, also the Shaws, Craigs and others, who have inter-married and are descendents of this Orser Family. I have given a true account of the older ones of the Family, and each branch can carry on their attachment of the Family.

CHAPTER EIGHT

After careful study of the Orser Family and feeling that as the Craig Family, and Shaw Families were so inter-mixed by marriage and birth, I should go back and state some more particulars of the early history, mentioning events shared in our early history.

To begin, when our Orser forefather came as a loyalist from New York to what was Parrtown, after named Saint John, as it was at the mouth of the noble St. John River, he found some settlers already there, and met a Miss Craig whom he married. Now this Craig family had come to this place, and by the records we find James Craig whose forefathers were of Scotch descent but came from the North of Ireland to Massachusetts, but, as loyalists, came to New Brunswick. Mr. Christopher Blake had settled at Reed's Point, on the St. John River. Mr. James Craig married Mr. Christopher Blake's daughter, Mary Blake. They had six children. Mr. Craig received a grant of land, as No. 983, on August 14th, 1784. Mary Blake, his wife, was born at Reed's Point in 1772 A. D. Her father, Christopher Blake was killed by the Indians, as afore written. Her husband, Mr. James Craig, died and she married Mr. William Orser, whose first wife, Miss Craig (a sister of Mrs. Blake's first husband) had died.

1780 Now I will add a fact of a historical event. Some 50 years ago my brother James and his wife (who was formerly Ida Dyer) Edith, sister of my wife, and her husband, my wife, formerly Lottie Wallace, and I had a hunting trip up the Tobique River, and on up the Wapske River; 10 miles up that river is a plain, about 20 acres of flat plain, with here and there a large tree, on the South side of the Wapske River, known as the Stewart plain. Old Settlers told us how it received its name; in the year 1870 the Indians raided the settlers along the St. John River down near Saint John, and a little girl (as near as I can find out she was the Mary Blake who first married to Mr. James Craig and later to Mr. William Orser, before they came up to

his grant of land at the mouth of the Becaguimac). No one knew where the child was, dead or alive, but a few years after she was lost and peace was made between the British and Americans (who had been granted their independence) the Indians had a village just below the ferry between St. Ann's (now Fredericton) and St. Mary's Ferry, so called, on the East side of the River, and each Spring the up-river Indians would come down after the ice ran out and bring down their furs and trade them out with the Traders, for things they needed. This particular year a Trader who had opened a store on the East side of the ferry (and to this day the long made-road of stone that led out for a long way from the East end of the ferry can be plainly seen — just above the bridge that people are crossing on) so that those wishing to cross the ferry could drive out on to get on the ferry at low water when the ferry could not come clear over. There is a store there yet. I do not know the name of the first trader, but the Bowlin Bros. now do business there. This time the Indians were there and had done most of their trading and about to go back up river. One of the Chiefs came to the store and wanted more liquor but had only a Church of England prayer book, with silver caps on the corners. The Chief held out the Book saying: "How much?" The Trader took the Book and inside the cover saw the name written there, the Family of the lost girl, so he gave the Indian what he wanted for the Book and went over at once to St. Ann's and showed the Officers there the Book.

Nova Scotia once had covered all that is New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. New Brunswick had been formed into a province and the Government had been established at what had been called St. Ann, now it was renamed "Fredericton". A Captain of the Rangers who had been granted land up there near the new place of Government of N. B., at once advised the Trader to return across the River and try and keep the Indians there for a few days more and he would take a party of the Rangers up the river and find the girl, if possible, as it was quietly rumored by friendly Indians that a young white girl was up there. The Captain told the Trader to tell the Indians that his birthday was coming and he would like all

the Indians to stay and help celebrate and he would pass out drinks and they all could celebrate. The Indians stayed and Capt. Stewart and his party departed up River in a long boat. They reached the Indian Village at the mouth of the Tobique River about night time. All the able bodied Indians were still away. Capt. Stewart made a good look and enquiry for the missing girl but did not find her. There was another village up the Tobique so up went the Captain, but a young Indian runner had gone post-haste overland to the village (at the mouth of the Wapske) and gave the alarm, as that was where the girl was, so before the Rangers reached the village the girl was taken 10 miles up the Wapske River to another village there, where the plain is, so Capt. Stewart left the big boat at Wapske mouth, as that river was too shallow and rapid a stream for the big boat, leaving a guard with the boat, he and party followed the Wapske up to the big plain, two brooks had to be crossed, first Beaver brook and a mile or more over a raise of ground, to the Over Rock brook. There the Indians tried to stop the Rangers, but as all the older able-bodied men were away and only the old people too aged to go down river to trade, and children and women who could not go. Capt. Stewart and the Rangers soon brushed the Indians away and there found the girl. They reached down the Tobique, ran the Red Rapids, but, as they approached the narrows, they had to prepare for trouble, as the rock cliffs rise so high on both banks of the Narrows they knew if the Indians knew they had the girl they could stop them, or hurl arrows, rock, or gunfire, down, so they had her lay flat in the bottom of the boat and threw blankets and a long coil of rope and what light stuff they had over, and when the Indians who saw them approach the Narrows, Capt. Stewart called to them, still asking about the girl and asking if they knew of any white girl being further up the St. John River and the Indians thought he had not found her, so they let the boat pass through the Narrows, and they brought her down with them. As near as I can find out, she was Mary Blake, and this is one reason that Mr. and Mrs. Orser (who first came and settled at the mouth of the Beca-guimac) got along so well with the Indians, as she knew their

ways and could speak with them and could aid and help them, and in case of sickness with their children and women; be a help and they looked up to her as one who was wise and could aid, and did help them, and Mr. Orser was stern and honourable with them.

There is a store now at the same place in St. Mary's Ferry opposite Fredericton, and some 50 odd years ago I was acquainted with the gentleman who was keeping store at the same place and I asked him if he ever heard the story about Capt. Stewart going up the Tobique and finding the girl and he told me the story, the same as the old people at the mouth of the Wapske; he was an old man then, and his sons still have the store. Mr. Bowlin was about 70 years of age when he told me the story.

CHAPTER NINE

William Orser had one son a Minister of the Gospel, George W. Orser, who was an able, eloquent, servant of God, and founder of the Primitive Baptist Church. Rev. Moses P. Orser, a son of J. Moses Orser, and Rev. Charles Orser, son of Edward Orser, Rev. George Elijah Orser, son of the Rev. George W. Orser, making 3 ministers of the grandsons of the said William Orser.

To end this short history of our Orser Family, I will add a few items showing the Family still is taking a part in our country's affairs: A. Neil McLean is a Senator; Lorne and Ereel Orser, sons of Nevers Orser, run a garage and farm implement branch at Hartland, and Ereel Orser has been on the Town Council, and Alderman for many years. Percy C. Barter, grandson of Samuel B. Orser, was taker of the census for 1951 for the Town of Hartland. I have tried to gather the History of the Family, so the young members of the Orser Family, and relatives, can look back on the history of their grandparents, to know who they were and that they were Loyalists and can tell their children of whom they have descended.

I thank my daughter Jane B. Allen, my cousin Annie McLean Caldwell, my cousin Irene Jones for helping me get the facts for this Family History.

Mrs. Annie Southam, Hartland, daughter of Mrs. Minnie Orser White, and granddaughter of the Rev. Moses P. Orser, for the loan of the original grant from the Crown to William Orser. My daughter, Florence Barter Lees for typing for me. I ask pardon of any I may have neglected to mention, and would add the cemetery used by our first Orsers is still owned by the sons of Frances Orser McLean (A. Neil and Allan McLean). They have erected a memorial stone in the cemetery and on it is engraced "In memory of William Orser, born in 1762, died 1854; Mary Blake Orser, born 1772, died 1856. Also at Black's Harbour, the Baptist Church was built and dedicated as a memorial to Frances Orser McLean by her sons.

May this short history of the Orser Family be a memory of the writer, Samuel G. Barter, son of James A. and Treceia Orser Barter. I am now over 80 years of age and would like the younger descendants of this branch of the old Orser Family to have a history of our ancestors.

Samuel G. Barter.

HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.



MAY 85

N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962

